HOUSE . . . . . . No. 1159

By Mr. Jones of North Reading, petition of Bradley H. Jones, Jr. and others relative to the appointment of attendance officers in schools whose purpose shall be to improve attendance in underperforming and chronically underperforming schools. Education.

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## PETITION OF:

Bradley H. Jones, Jr.

Mary S. Rogeness
George N. Peterson, Jr.

John A. Lepper
Viriato Manuel deMacedo
Elizabeth A. Poirier
Donald F. Humason, Jr.

Susan W. Pope
Susan Williams Gifford
Robert S. Hargraves
Paul J.P. Loscocco
Shirley A. Gomes
Michael J. Coppola
Richard J. Ross

In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN UNDER PERFORMING SCHOOLS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

- 1 Chapter 76 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2002 Offi-
- 2 cial Edition, is hereby amended, by inserting after section 19, the
- 3 following section:
- 4 Section 19A. The principal of an underperforming or a chroni-
- 5 cally underperforming school as, defined in sections 1J and
- 6 section 1K of chapter 69, shall appoint one or more attendance
- 7 officers in the school whose purpose shall be to improve atten-
- 8 dance in underperforming and chronically underperforming
- 9 schools.
- 10 Every attendance officer shall notify the parent or a legal
- 11 guardian of a student who is absent from school for a half or a full
- 12 school day on the day that the student is absent. The attendance
- 13 officer shall send a letter to the student's residence, contact the

parent of the legal guardian by telephone, by email or both, and may visit the student's residence if the attendance officer is not able to contact the parent or the legal guardian by such other means.

Attendance officers shall set up a meeting with a parent or a legal guardian if a student is absent more then four times in one semester without a doctor's note or a parent notification to the attendance officer, or both. The purpose of the meeting will be to implement a plan to improve the student's attendance rate in school. If the attendance officer is unable to contact the parent or a legal guardian, the superintendent of the school which a student attends shall not to promote the student to the next grade level until the parent of the legal guardian of said student has met with the student's teacher, a guidance counselor or both.